

THE CHURCHES AND TO-DAY'S SERVICES

The Marriage at Cana

Sermon by
REV. W. T. PALMER, D. D.
Pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg, Va.

Text: John 2:10. "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have drunk, then that which it was set, then those have kept the good wine until now."

This jocular remark of the ruler of the feast is only an incident of the marriage at Cana, of Galilee, and has no direct spiritual significance, except that his testimony proves the reality of the miracle. Evidently he knew nothing of what had been done, he had not even water poured into the water-jugs by the Lord's command. There was no collusion or connivance between him and the servants, unless between him and the Master. But he not only testifies that the liquid was now wine, which a few moments before was water, but that it was wine of exceptional good quality.

What was that caused his surprise? The uniform testimony is that the wine was first set forth, and this was based on the fact that men who have drunk freely are at least indifferent to the quality of the wine set before them, indeed cannot detect the difference. So this governor of the feast makes a general remark about the way in which such banquets were usually managed, and explains his surprise that in this respect the custom had been transgressed. But he speaks rather than he knows. Without in any degree attacking the principles of a law-making law of life.

THE GOOD WINE FIRST; THE BAD WINE LAST!

Certainly this was economical, and would not in the least diminish the enjoyment of the guests, because after a certain amount of indulgence appetite palls, taste is dulled, the mind is clouded. The guests would neither be able to distinguish the bad from the good, nor care in the least for the quality of the wine, if only there was wine to drink.

And if reproached for our insensibility and folly, we—supposing ourselves to be the guests, would excuse and justify ourselves on the plea that "We have become so accustomed to it we do not notice it." Very often nowadays this statement is made, and evidently without a thought of its ugly significance.

That play is very questionable, or most likely, unquestionably bad. How can you go to see it?" "Oh, I have become so accustomed to that sort of thing, I never think of it."

"The present style of dress is very—really immoral." "Oh, yes, to be sure, but one becomes so accustomed to it that one does not notice it."

"Some forms of the modern dance are positively immoral. Not only are the associations generally demoralizing and the exhibitions in dress shameless, but the dance itself is that form of it has merited the sharpest censure from wise men, and perfectly unprejudiced judges." "Well, yes, that must be admitted, but I enjoy what is artistic and beautiful. As for the rest, I am so accustomed to it that I never think of it."

WHY NOT FRANKLY EXAMINE THIS LUXURY?

I purpose to examine some of certain which we still retain with a certain sensitiveness. But why should we not speak frankly of these things, and honestly examine the merits of this exercise? Christian people are saying this. "We have become so accustomed that we do not think," which means exactly this: You have gone from good to bad, from right to wrong, until at last you do not think of觉悟化 bad self-indulgence leads to dissipation and dissipation to moral and spiritual infidelity.

If let self-respect and righteousness, truth and purity rose up in revolt at the outrage, and the soul was shocked by the realization that no revulsion of feeling came over him of shame smitten the cheek, no shrinking of the sensitive soul was felt? "So accustomed to that I never think."

To become so accustomed to evil in its expression of it as to no longer experience revulsion of feeling, proves a blunting of the moral sensibilities. Once these were familiarized and painful sensations are no longer felt, when evil is presented in its greatest, this only proves that the person in question has lost some of the finest sensibilities of our nature, that the strongest and most lasting safeguards of virtue have been broken down, and that the moral character has undergone serious depreciation.

DECLARATION INVOLVES SELF-CONDAMNATION

The declaration is most often made in self-justification but rarely involves self-condemnation. It contains a double confession:

"What I have seen or heard is wicked, I know; I confess that, but I am not shocked by it."

"What we are doing, my friends and myself, is bad, condemned by God's Word and the sober judgment of men—condemned it. But I experience no aversion of feeling."

"What I hear, impure, indecent, that is true. My soul utters no protest, my soul does not shrink from terror from the bare suggestion. I have become so accustomed to it all that I do not feel or even notice it."

Conscience is the voice of the Eternal in the soul; but now speaks more harsh, unmerciful, unmerciful, modesty is the faint, low-toned influences life but now has sickness and died. Virtue's flame, which suffuses the delicate cheek, is now become the consumptive hectic flush. Purity of soul, that instinctively shrinks, like sensitive plant, from the rude touch of the hand, now tough and hard as a man's foot. The mortal forces that ought to fight to the last trench have thrown down arms and traitorously surrendered to the foe.

We turn with a fierce curse upon the modern, hypocritical preaching, that "Virtue is blind and must needs be enlightened." Cursed be the social wants that sin against the social wants of youth! Cursed be the social laws that warp us from the living Truth! Cursed be the sickly forms that cry from honest Nature's rule!"

CONDITION MOST SERIOUS AND FINALLY HOPELESS

How perfectly evident that our natures are one compacted whole! How vain to say, I only see and hear! We cannot stop with seeing and hearing; we cannot help being affected throughout our whole nature by what we see and hear. The confession, that we see or hear, or even do wrong, and from long indifference are shocked or shamed by it, is proof positive that we have been already seriously affected; the deadly work is begun, and who can say what the end will be?

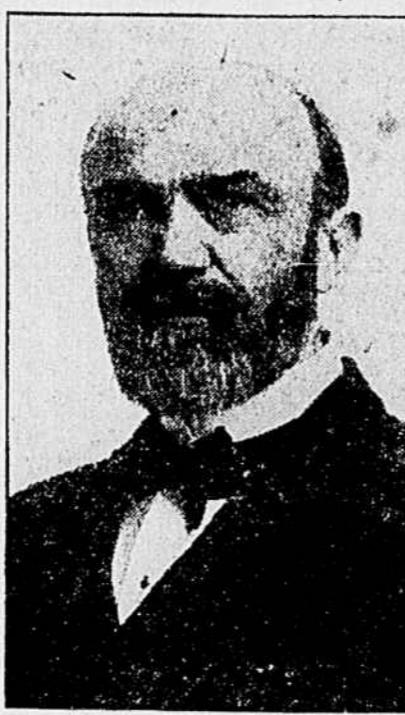
4. This condition, in any degree of it, is most serious and finally hopeless.

The facts already adduced sufficiently serve the seriousness of this condition, as in itself dangerous and progressive. No one is so foolish as to treat lightly the impairment of a physical faculty or sense, of the sight, for example. But

ABILITY TO PERCEIVE SIN DOES NOT CHANGE ITS NATURE

2. Failure of inability to perceive does not change the essential nature

Virginia Methodist Conference Meets Here This Week



REV. T. MC S. SIMPSON,
Presiding Elder.



REV. FRED CHENUANT,
Pastor of Broad Street Church.



BISHOP JOHN C. KILGO,
Presiding Officer.

METHODIST CONFERENCE OPENS ON WEDNESDAY

Bishop John C. Kilgo, of Charlotte, to Be the Presiding Officer.

SESSIONS TO LAST FOR WEEK

Evangelistic Services Will Be Held Each Night at Broad Street Church, With Distinguished Visiting Speakers.

Bishop John C. Kilgo, of Charlotte, to Be the Presiding Officer.

Rev. Fred Chenuant, Presiding Elder.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. Walter L. Linck, D. D., of Union Theological Seminary, will preach at 11 o'clock this morning and at 8 o'clock this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.

Rev. J. K. Kilgo, pastor of the Laurel Street Methodist Church, will open the conference with a sermon this evening.